

PARTISAN DEFENCE COMMITTEE

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!



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South African government: Hands off Malema and the EFF!

The East London Magistrate's Court on 1 October found EFF leader Julius Malema guilty on all counts for a 2018 gun-related charge, which carries the possibility of a 15-year prison sentence. ***Anti-imperialists internationally, all fighters for black freedom, and all those opposed to the neo-apartheid South African government must protest this vendetta!***

The case originated with AfriForum, the lobby group for white farmers that has also been instrumental in pushing Donald Trump to put the squeeze on South Africa. When Trump read the riot act to Cyril Ramaphosa during his visit to the Oval Office back in May, he made it clear that clamping down on Malema and the EFF was a precondition for any renegotiation of the crushing 30% tariffs that he had imposed on South African exports to the US.

Obedience to this imperialist diktat has been clear and swift. In August, a Western Cape court found Malema guilty of "hate speech" for remarks he made years ago at an EFF protest against exclusion of black learners from a white-run school, saying that black people must defend themselves against attacks by white racists. The 1 October ruling is even more transparent. Malema is supposed to have fired a rifle into the air to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the EFF's founding. For this symbolic and completely harmless act, which happened seven years ago, he is now threatened with 15 years in prison. Simultaneously, the GNU and Randlords have been trumpeting that a breakthrough with the Trump government appears to be just around the corner. (Whether or not that transpires is another matter, especially with the US government shutdown.) It is no accident that cases against Malema that had been dragged out for years have now suddenly been set in motion, clearly aimed at showing that the GNU is serious about cracking down on its radical opponents.

Speaking to EFF supporters outside the court after the verdict, Malema denounced the ruling for what it is: wretched appeasement of AfriForum, Trump and the white monopoly capitalists of South Africa. He promised not to back down: "As a revolutionary, going to prison or death is a badge of honour.... Whatever they want to do, they must know that we will not retreat from the ideas and the seven cardinal pillars of the EFF."

Hands off Julius Malema! Hands off the EFF!

4 October 2025

The Partisan Defence Committee is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defence organisation which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.